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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

October 9, 1939.

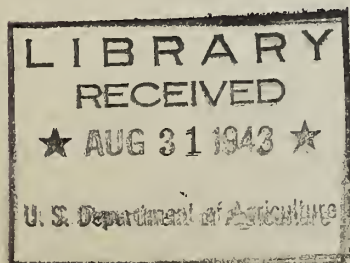
SCALE MEMORANDUM NO. 1

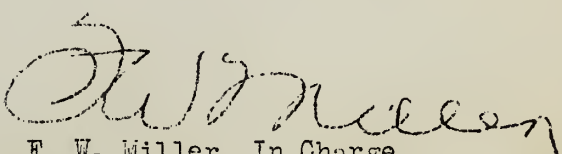
For the information of scale agencies and others concerned in the testing of scales at stockyards posted under the Packers and Stockyards Act.

Scales for weighing livestock under the supervision of the Packers and Stockyards Act should be tested with standard weights to the capacity at which they are used. The accuracy of scales in weighing heavy loads can not be safely established from tests made at lighter loads. Where scales have beams, the capacities of which are in excess of the maximum loads weighed, it is not necessary to test the scales to the beam capacity beyond the heaviest loads weighed. Briefly stated, the proper test and verification of a scale consist in proving that it weighs all loads correctly for all positions they may assume on the scale platform; and each poise, beam notch, counterpoise weight, main lever, and part which has an independent effect on the indication of the scale must be tested separately in order to establish its individual accuracy.

The equipment required for properly testing livestock scales consists of carefully standardized test weights, the continued accuracy of which is established by tests which are made from time to time. The test weights recommended for livestock scales consist of 2000 pounds of 50-pound cast-iron test weights, a sufficient number of 1000-pound test weights of suitable design, or in some instances 500-pound weights, to continue the tests up to the maximum loads which are weighed over the scale, and 50 pounds of assorted small weights so selected that any weight from one-half pound on up by one-half pound increments may be placed on the platform. Mechanical devices should be provided for handling the large test weights quickly.

The use of a large number of 50-pound test weights for the test is not recommended for the reason that the labor involved is so much of a hardship on the men who handle the weights that the tendency to curtail the work is strong and often is of disadvantage in making adjustments on the scale. Those conducting the tests should be free to have the weights placed upon the scale platform and removed as many times as may be necessary to determine errors and to make adjustments.



  
F. W. Miller, In Charge,  
Administration of Packers and Stockyards Act.

